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OTR 79-3011

13 April 1979

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

FROM: Donald E. Smith
Director of Training

SUBJECT: Recommendations for Acquiring and
Enhancing Agency Language Skills ☐

1. The first attachment contains recommendations and procedures for acquiring and enhancing Agency language skills. It has been reviewed by ☐, Deputy Director/NFAC, Thomas Polgar, Chief/Personnel Management Group/DDO, and ☐ Chief/Production Group ☐ for DDS&T. A second attachment contains a rough estimate of the cost and other impact related to the recommendations. ☐

2. The recommendations reflect general agreement among the directorates, but each has different interests which can only be accommodated by specific measures, particularly concerning incentives, for each directorate. For example, DDS&T and NFAC would not reward language proficiency in terms of promotion consideration, competitive ranking, or entrance-on-duty salary increments at less than the "3" level (Minimum Professional Proficiency). The DDO, in contrast, would give consideration to the "2" level (Limited Working Proficiency) in similar circumstances. As agreement was not reached among the directorates on the precise amount of cash awards, options are presented. Cash awards emerge as the single most important item in the incentive recommendations. The directorates agree that the program should be carried out by each directorate with assistance from the Office of Training and the Office of Personnel. ☐

/s/ Donald E. Smith

Donald E. Smith

Warning Notice - Intelligence
Sources & Methods Involved

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Recommendations for Acquiring and Enhancing
Agency Language Skills

I. Introduction

The recommendations are designed to assist in the recruiting of language-qualified professionals and to insure language competence in operations officers, analysts, and others who are in or will occupy positions in which proficiency in a language is essential. The varying needs of the directorates should be recognized by allowing each directorate to establish specific criteria directed toward satisfying Unit Language Requirements (ULRs) within general policy guidelines. Upon approval of recommendations for acquiring and enhancing Agency language skills by the Deputy Director of Central Intelligence, the recommendations will be implemented by each directorate.

II. Selection of Personnel

A. The Office of Personnel will develop procedures to identify more and better language-qualified persons as a source of new professional officers.

B. Procedures to be considered include:

1. Publicizing the importance of language qualifications for Agency professional employment and the attendant salary increments.

2. Designation of personnel recruiters to cover areas with the largest concentration of foreign language speakers in order to recruit against specific language requirements.

3. Stressing enhanced language aptitude for prospective employees in designated career tracks and assuring that strong motivation and willingness to learn languages is a characteristic of each applicant.

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4. Providing salary increments in the form of step increase(s) to a maximum of three to entering professionals for tested language proficiencies at the directorate-specified skill or combination of skill level in languages designated by each directorate as relevant to its needs.

5. Recruiting and maintaining a pool or reserve of language-qualified personnel, including retired annuitants, who would be security cleared and on call for assignments on a WAE contract basis for components which require language expertise. Criteria for selection would be consolidated from requirements submitted by user components.

III. Incentives

A. Promotion Eligibility

Adopt and implement a policy whereby promotion eligibility and long-term career prospects are greatly enhanced by the acquisition of language skill(s). The promotion criteria or precepts of each directorate should include language competency standards in appropriate career tracks or occupational groups; these standards should apply to grade levels, as selected by the directorates, which:

1. Specify a proficiency level for either all languages, or language groups, or individual languages.

2. Specify the skill (Reading, Speaking, Understanding) or combination of same, in which the proficiency level is required.

B. Competitive Ranking/Assignments

1. Career Boards/Panels will include language qualifications as a specification or precept in the competitive ranking of personnel.

2. Those officers who possess the specified language qualifications normally will be given preference when assignments to ULR positions are considered.

C. Maintenance and Testing of Language Skills

Maintenance of language skills is a vital element in the Agency language program. Individual language skills must be confirmed by a proficiency test. Proficiency tests will normally be conducted at the OTR Language School. Validation of test scores will be the responsibility of the Language School, which may approve tests to be administered abroad by OTR Language School instructors, Foreign Service Institute instructors, or other methods in keeping with a common standard.

D. Quality Step Increases

Quality Step Increases may be recommended by Career Boards/Panels for:

1. Acquisition or maintenance of 4- and 5-level language proficiency.
2. Acquisition or maintenance of 3-level or higher proficiencies in three languages or more.
3. Acquisition or maintenance of proficiency in languages designated by directorates as critical to directorate needs.
4. Acquisition of proficiency in languages which are not universally applicable, i.e., restricted to the limited use of a particular locale.
5. Acquisition of language proficiency through study in residence abroad or private study (as distinguished from Agency-sponsored training).

E. Cash Awards

A cash award in the form of a salary increment will be granted to those officers who meet the qualifications and fill a Unit Language Requirement. The salary increment will be in effect only during the tenure in the ULR-designated position.

Amount options:

1. \$500 to \$1,000 per year.
2. \$1,200 per year.
3. \$1,000 per year for first language; \$500 per year for each additional language up to a total of three.
4. \$1,200 per year for first language; \$600 per year for each additional language up to a total of three.

IV. More Effective Utilization of Language Training

The key to effective language training and full utilization of Language School resources is personnel planning and management. Specific measures include:

A. Identification of Unit Language Requirements and identification of personnel to fill those positions on a one-year advance planning cycle.

B. As feasible, requiring initial language training to be on a full-time basis.

C. Planning and implementing the advance enrollment of designated personnel in language training appropriate to their individual needs (i.e., beginning, advanced, refresher, maintenance) on the basis of projected ULRs.

D. Commitment by the directorates to the full term of training required for the students to achieve necessary proficiencies.

E. Language School planning which can be done on the receipt of component training requirements. Advance planning will enable the Language School, whose capacity has not been fully utilized because classes normally run well below the optimum number, to absorb an increased training load.

F. Increased application by the Language School or total immersion programs, specialized reading-only courses, and maintenance courses.

G. Meeting the training needs of personnel who have not been identified as eligible for ULRs.

1. Well-publicized self-study programs assisted and monitored by an instructor.

2. Regularly scheduled weekend total immersion sessions for non-Language School students.

3. Regularly scheduled language lunches in the Headquarters cafeteria conducted by Language School instructors.

V. General

A. In the absence of a community standard, any Agency officer working in combination with equivalent officers from other agencies will be compensated for language competence on the same basis as the "most favored" officer participating in the group.

B. In order to maintain linguistic capability at a high level in the Agency, remove the GS-12 ceiling on non-supervisory linguist positions.

C. To attain a pool of language-qualified junior officers, assign a percentage of incoming Career Trainees to language training as their initial assignment. Assignments would be recommended by directorates on the basis of future needs.

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Attachment 2

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Cost/Impact Statement

Cash Awards

1. The most significant expense proposed in the recommendations relates to the salary increment to be paid to those officers who fill ULR positions. The highest recommended cash award (\$1200 per year) would amount to the following if all skills in all language requirements were fulfilled in the 1,315 Unit Language Requirements which exist today:

a.	DDO	-	\$1,154,000
	NFAC	-	161,000
	DDA	-	18,000
	DDS&T	-	<u>245,000</u>

Agency Total \$1,578,000

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b. At the rate of \$1,000 per year, the figures are:

	DDO	-	\$ 962,000
	NFAC	-	134,000
	DDA	-	15,000
	DDS&T	-	<u>204,000</u>

Agency Total \$1,315,000

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c. If the maximum rate recommended (\$1200 per year) was awarded on the basis of Unit Language Requirements fulfilled according to FY 78 statistics, the figures would be:

	DDO	-	44.6% fulfilled:	\$515,000
	NFAC	-	38.8% fulfilled:	62,000
	DDA	-	53.3% fulfilled:	10,000
	DDS&T	-	68.6% fulfilled:	<u>168,000</u>

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Agency Total: \$755,000

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d. Cash awards paid at the rate of \$500 per year for all ULRs would amount to an Agency total cost of \$658,000 per year.

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e. Approximately 10% of the Unit Language Requirements require multiple languages (primarily [] and OSO positions). Salary increments for multiple languages could add approximately \$70,000 to \$130,000 to the total cost at the \$1,000 per year rate if \$500 per year is awarded for additional languages, and from approximately \$80,000 to \$160,000 at the \$1,200 (plus \$600 additional for each language) per year rate.

2. Accepting any of the proposed recommendations would appreciably increase the \$61,450 awarded in FY 78 under the Language Proficiency Cash Award (LPCA) program. The LPCA program would be abolished upon the acceptance of the proposed recommendations.

Entrance on Duty

Based on FY 78 figures, approximately fifty new employees (including only six Career Trainees) would have qualified for a one-step increase (approximately \$550) in starting salary for junior officers; the total cost would have amounted to about \$28,000. Adjusting starting salaries according to DDO recommendations for rewarding proficiencies according to the difficulty of the language would amount to a slightly more but equally insignificant amount. Costs for a single year are not significant even if the number of new employees to be rewarded for language qualifications doubles, but projecting an average step increase of \$550 for a junior officer over a twenty-five year career raises the commitment in increased salary to a total of \$13,750 for each step increase awarded.

Promotion Eligibility

Giving greater and more specific weight to language proficiency as a factor in promotion eligibility would not increase the number of promotions, at least initially. The ultimate cost of this policy would raise salary costs, but not to a significant degree.

Quality Step Increases

A realistic estimate of the number of employees who would receive Quality Step Increases under the five conditions recommended would be approximately 100 officers, resulting in a total cost of \$77,000 per year to reward this group. Quality Step Increases, however, result in a career-long increment. A single step increase at the GS-12 level is \$770. Over a presumed future tenure of fifteen years, each in-grade promotion would amount to an average total cost to the Agency of \$11,550. ☐

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Language School

The increased instruction and testing implicit in the recommendations appear to remain within Language School capability. Foreseeable and regular requirements stemming from better planning will enable the Language School to fully utilize its resources. ☐

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Office of Personnel

Consideration must be given to acquiring additional Personnel recruiters to concentrate on foreign language communities. ☐

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Other Consequences

In addition to the rough estimate of \$2,000,000 per year as the direct potential cost of the optimum options recommended, certain administrative and personnel expenses would ensue. They do not appear to be significant; we assume most administration can be absorbed by existing resources, with the exception of additional recruiters needed by the Office of Personnel. ☐

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